Subspecies are really only one of the many questions that the committee has before it, and in the opinion of the writer one of the minor questions. While in the old days it was possible for the committee to "pass" on all proposed new species and subspecies, with the modern refinement in distinctions this is quite impossible. The committee is composed of busy men who cannot often come together and who cannot gain access to all the material necessary, even if they had the time to study it, and it would be foolish to pass snap judgment on the careful work of specialists. Such action would demand no consideration or respect. It is the writer's opinion that, after eliminating such alleged subspecies as are obviously based on seasonal, sexual or other such differences, all others to which no objection has been raised should be placed in the 'Check-List' to stand or fall as subsequent investigation may decide. No check-list is the last word on the subject. It is merely the present systematic aspect of the science, and the number of subspecies accepted is purely a matter of individual opinion.

The reviewer has no more personal use for subspecies separated on minute characters than has Mr. Figgins, because they do not happen to concern the work in which he is most interested, but that is no reason why he should object to others describing them or using them in their work, nor does it give him any warrant to doubt the accuracy of their work. Neither is he interested in the minute and detailed nomenclature of the muscles nor is he able to distinguish them but he realizes that others can do this and reach important results from their anatomical study. Why this rather general clamor against subspecies on the part of field ornithologists, collectors, oölogists, etc., it is hard to understand. If subspecies do not pertain to their work why bother with them? Let them be satisfied with the species but do not try to hamper the work of those who can and do make use of them for the advancement of scientific knowledge.—W. S.

Gardner on Modification and Taxonomic Value of the Tongue in Birds.—Lt. Gardner[1] takes up the study of the bird's tongue about where Lucas left it in 1896, and goes much more thoroughly into the matter, having been fortunate in securing a much wider range of material upon which to base his work.

Generally speaking he finds that this organ is, as has been considered by others, extremely variable and obviously correlated directly with the character of food upon which the bird depends. Where the food habits of a family or order is the same throughout, we naturally find that the structure of the tongue is similar in all species of the group and becomes a group character. Its taxonomic value, however, seems to be very slight, since, from similarity of food or convergent evolution, resemblances in tongue structure will be found where no true relationship between the birds exists.

[1] The Adaptive Modifications and the Toxonomic Value of the Tongue in Birds. By Leon L. Gardner. Proc. U. S. Nat. Mus., Vol. 67, Art. 19, pp. 1–49. 1925.

There are, however, cases where closely related species present marked differences in tongue structure as in the genera *Melospiza*, *Zosterops* and *Dendroica*, possibly due to differences in feeding that we have not yet appreciated.

Lt. Gardner groups bird tongues into eight categories, as follows:

1. Generalized type of birds of omnivorous diet, including most of the passerine forms.
2. Fish-eaters with sharp stiff retrorse spines.
3. Diet of small objects strained from water resulting in the complicated tongue seen in the Anatidae.
4. Flesh-eaters with heavy, rasping tongue.
5. Probers with extensile, more or less barbed tongues—Woodpeckers, Tits and Nuthatches.
6. Seed and nut-eaters, with strong, fleshy tongues as in the Parrots.
7. Flower-frequenting birds with forked, most complicated, split or tubular tongues—Honey-suckers, Hummingbirds, Flower-peckers etc.
8. Rudimentary tongues as in the Gannets, Storks, etc.

The paper is illustrated by beautifully executed drawings of tongues of 200 species of birds, which add very materially to its value.

Lt. Gardner is to be congratulated upon an excellent piece of work, which at once becomes our standard work of reference on the subject.—W. S.

Dickey and Van Rossem on New Birds from Salvador and Mexico.—In 1912, Mr. Van Rossem made a collecting trip to Salvador and a study of his material results in the diagnoses[1] of four new forms, *Pipromorpha assimilis obscura* (p. 133), *Myadestes obscurus oberholseri* (p. 133), *Catharus melpomene bangsi* (p. 135) and *Cyclarhis flaviventris mesoleucus* (p. 135). In another publication[2] the Red-winged Blackbird from Nyrit, Mexico, is described as new, under the name *Agelaius phoeniceus nyaritensis* (p. 131).—W. S.

Casey Wood's 'Sketches of Oceania.' While enjoying his travels to remote parts of the world Dr. Casey A. Wood has at times sent back to his friends at home most interesting manuscript accounts of his itinerary and now some of his experiences in Oceania have been published[3] by the Smithsonian Institution in the annual report for 1924. This narrative begins with an account of Captain Cook and his voyages and extends to the author's visits to Australia, New Zealand, Fiji, etc. All through are interesting comments on the bird life of these far away countries and

[1] Four New Birds from Salvador. By Donald R. Dickey and A. J. Van Rossem. Proc. Biol. Soc. Washington, Vol. 38, pp. 133–136. November 13, 1925.

[2] A New Red-winged Blackbird from Western Mexico. Ibid., pp. 131–132. November 13, 1925.

[3] Sketches from the Notebook of a Naturalist-Traveler in Oceania During the Year 1923. By Casey A. Wood. From the Smithsonian Report for 1924, pp. 379–408.